

ART. IV.—*Note on the presence of Peripatus insignis in Tasmania.*

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Up to the present time the only record of *Peripatus* from Tasmania is that of a single specimen described by Mr. J. J. Fletcher.

On the continent of Australia at any rate two, and possibly three, species exist. There are *P. leuckartii*, *P. insignis* and a Victorian form as yet referred to the former species, but which may possibly turn out to be distinct.

In Victoria *Peripatus* has never yet been found in such abundance as Mr. Fletcher has recently described in the case of the New South Wales form, *P. leuckartii*, from the Blue Mountains, and of our two species the one first described by Dr. Dendy as *P. insignis* is comparatively rare.

Whilst in Tasmania during the summer of 1893 I searched hard for *Peripatus* on Mount Wellington, in the Lake St. Clair district, around Dee Bridge and Parattah. Though the localities were apparently favourable ones I only succeeded in finding it at Dee Bridge, where, under fallen logs and within the space of half an acre I found some fifteen specimens.

The interest of these lies in the fact that they are all referable to the species *P. insignis*, with which they agree in the absence of the accessory tooth on the outer jaw, in the possession of fourteen pair of legs, and, generally speaking, in colouration. Just as in the case of *P. leuckartii* there is a wide range of variation in colouration, from very dark purplish-black specimens, in which only the rudiments of a skin pattern can be detected, to others in which the latter is a very marked feature.

A point to notice is the large size of the specimens as compared with those of the mainland—a feature not infrequent in the case

of other forms of life common to Tasmania and the continent. Those described by Dr. Dendy from Victoria measured, after preservation in spirits, about eleven millimetres in length, and one millimetre in greatest breadth. Of the Tasmanian form (killed by drowning and subsequent preservation in spirit), three of the largest measure, respectively, twenty-three, seventeen and fifteen millimetres in length (exclusive of tentacles), and four, three, and three millimetres in breadth, whilst the smaller ones, evidently immature, measure eleven millimetres in length, and one millimetre in breadth.

It is again worthy of note that just as in the case of many other forms so in that of *Peripatus* we find an alliance between the S.E. part of Australia and Tasmania.

I may add that in the same localities—St. Clair, Dee Bridge, and Parattah, I also found considerable numbers of the land Nemertine—*Geonemertes australiensis*—of which only one specimen has hitherto been recorded from Tasmania.

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